

Message Text

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43

ACTION SCSE-00

INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 ISO-00 SCA-01 L-03 AGR-10 EB-07 COME-00

JUSE-00 SS-15 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 USIA-15 CIAE-00

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R 272310Z JAN 76

FM AMCONSUL CIUDAD JUAREZ

TO AMEMBASSY MEXICO

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 622

UNCLAS CIUDAD JUAREZ 048

E.O. 11652: N/AA

TAGS: CPRS, MX

SUBJECT: POSSIBLE US CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT IN LAND TENANCY
ISSUES IN NUEVO CASAS GRANDES.

REF: MEXICO 0973

1. SITUATION AS FOLLOWS: MORMONS FROM U.S. CAME TO CHIHUAHUA IN 1887 AND SETTLED ON SEVERAL TRACTS OF LAND WHICH THEY PURCHASED FROM PRESIDENT PORFIRIO DIAZ. THOSE TRACTS OF LAND FORMED FIVE COLONIAS--JUAREZ, DUBLAN, CHUICHUPA, GARCIA AND PACHECO. ONLY COLONIAS JUAREZ AND DUBLAN ARE NOW POPULATED BY DESCENDANTS OF ORIGINAL MORMON SETTLERS. THERE ARE SIXTY FAMILIES IN EACH COLONIA TOTALING APPROXIMATELY FIVE HUNDRED PEOPLE, ABOUT HALF OF WHOM ARE U.S. CITIZENS AND HALF MEXICAN CITIZENS. THE LANDS THEY OCCUPY ARE AMONG THE MOST BEAUTIFUL AND PRODUCTIVE IN CHIHUAHUA. WELL CARED FOR ORCHARDS, CATTLE RANCHES, IMMACULATE HOUSES, SCHOOL AND CHURCH STAND OUT IN SHARP CONTRAST TO THE SURROUNDING AREAS.

2. IT SEEMS THAT DURING EVERY PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION YEAR ATTEMPTS ARE MADE BY LEADERS OF EJIDATARIOS IN THE AREA TO ACQUIRE THE MORMON-OWNED LANDS ON THE BASIS OF A CLAIM THAT THOSE LANDS FORM PART OF THE EJIDO CASAS GRANDES.

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3. ACCORDING TO ONE OF THE U.S. CITIZEN MORMONS WITH WHOM I SPOKE, EJIDATARIO LEADERS HAVE ENLISTED THE HELP OF THE PRESS IN THEIR EFFORTS TO OUST THE MORMONS FROM THEIR LANDS. THIS LAND TENANCY ISSUE WENT BEFORE THE COURTS OF MEXICO FIFTEEN OR TWENTY YEARS AGO AND THE COURTS RULED IN FAVOR OF THE MORMON OCCUPANTS. NOW, AS IN PAST YEARS, THERE HAVE BEEN THREATS MADE AGAINST THEM AND A CONSIDERABLE AMOUNT OF PROPAGANDA IS GENERATED BY THE OUTSPOKEN CLAIMS OF THE EJIDATARIO BOSSES. I HAVE BEEN INFORMED, HOWEVER, THAT THIS YEAR'S PUBLICITY ON THE ISSUE IS GREATER THAN EVER BEFORE--THAT QUOTE PEOPLE WITH MONEY ARE BEHIND IN UNQUOTE-- AND THAT THE ISSUE MAY NOT BE PUT TO REST AS EASILY NOW AS IN THE PAST. HOWEVER, ATTORNEYS WHO REPRESENT THE MORMONS IN THIS MATTER INDICATE THEY ARE OPTIMISTIC THAT NOTHING WILL COME OF THESE RENEWED ATTEMPTS TO FORCE THEM OFF THEIR LANDS.

4. CIUDAD JUAREZ NEWSPAPERS REPORT THAT A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE LOCAL OFFICE OF THE SECRETARIAT OF AGRARIAN REFORM, ING. AGUSTIN MACIAS DE LAO, IS SCHEDULED TO VISIT CASAS GRANDES JANUARY 31 TO MEET WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF EJIDO CASAS GRANDES WHO CLAIM THE MORMON LANDS BELONG TO THEIR EJIDO, AND THAT AN INVESTIGATION IS UNDER WAY OF THE OWNERSHIP TITLES TO THAT LAND. ING. DE LA O IS ALSO REPORTED AS SAYING THAT THE FINAL DECISION IN THIS MATTER WILL HAVE TO BE MADE BY THE SECRETARIAT OF AGRARIAN REFORM.

5. I AM FOLLOWING THE SITUATION CLOSELY AND WILL REPORT FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS.
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